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Franklin, Tennessee

August 31, 1960

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The Honorable Carlton Loser  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Loser:

I am writing as spokesman for a group of fairly young citizens who are highly concerned with the treatment likely to be accorded Mr. Francis Powers, the pilot who has recently been tried in Moscow for espionage. It is our understanding that Mr. Powers was paid \$30,000 per year for making the flights which he made. It is our understanding also that he was not an active member of any organized United States military body, that terms of Mr. Powers' employment included an agreement to demolish his airplane before it could fall into enemy hands and also to take his own life if necessary to prevent his capture and subsequent interrogation. These have been the terms under which other pilots known to me have performed these same duties.

A great number of Americans, of which I am one, consider Mr. Powers' action - or his refusal to act - the most reprehensible cowardice. Our armed forces are thoroughly indoctrinated with the instruction that they must give no more than name, rank, serial number and date of birth if they are captured. It is true that Mr. Powers is no longer a member of the armed services, but I find it impossible to believe that this briefing and indoctrination did not extend to him.

That Mr. Powers had no more patriotism than to permit what happened to happen, many of us find grievously disappointing. As a lawyer, I cannot excuse his actions on the basis of "brain washing" because a reasonable man would expect brain washing. Thus Mr. Powers should certainly have known what would happen in the hands of the Russians. He has permitted us to be embarrassed in the eyes of the world to save his own cowardly life.

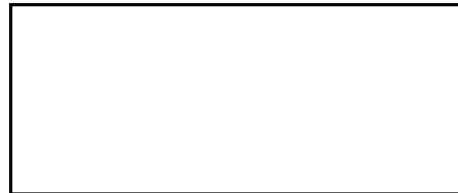
There is no way now to undo what has been done. I notice, however, press reports that the United States will pay Mr. Powers' annual \$30,000 salary while he is in Soviet prison. A large number of us feel that Mr. Powers has betrayed his country and certainly should not be receiving any remuneration from our government under that circumstance.

The Honorable Carlton Loser

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I am writing to ask you to investigate th allegations of this letter, to inform me of their validity or falsity, and, if they are true, to do whatever you can to keep us from giving more than a quarter of a million dollars to Mr. Powers. I also believe steps should be taken to make sure our people are thoroughly indoctrinated with the importance and seriousness of the situation, if that is not already the case, before they are sent on these missions. I hope to hear from you as soon as possible with respect to this extremely important matter.

Respectfully yours,



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